

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 IOE-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07
INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3502
INFO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 7253

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PLAB, ILO
SUBJECT: ILO: REPORT OF DEMARCHES ON 63RD INTERNATIONAL LABOR
CONFERENCE

REF: (A) STATE 103403; (B) STATE 102699

1. ON MAY 11 CHARGE MET FOREIGN SECRETARY JAGAT MEHTA AND INFORMED HIM THAT HE HAD INSTRUCTIONS TO DISCUSS THE ILO WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER, MEHTA REPLIED THAT THE MINISTER WAS AGAIN VERY MUCH INVOLVED IN POLITICAL AFFAIRS (STATE ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS ARE TO BE HELD NEXT MONTH). THE FOREIGN SECRETARY SAID THAT HE WAS FAMILIAR WITH THE PROBLEMS OF THE ILO, AS HE HAD ONLY THE PREVIOUS DAY SPOKEN TO THE VISITING DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE ILO, BERT BOLIN. AT THE REQUEST OF THE CHARGE, MEHTA SAID THAT HE WOULD INFORM THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF THE DEMARCHE AND ADDED THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THE IMPORTANCE THE USG ATTACHES TO THIS ISSUE.

2. CHARGE THEN MADE PRESENTATION ALONG LINES REFTELS. MEHTA COMMENTED THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED THESE ISSUES WITH BOLIN WHO THOUGHT THE US PROPOSALS WOULD BE APPROVED. THE CHARGE THEN CALLED MEHTA'S ATTENTION TO THE NEGATIVE POSITION THE GOI
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MEMBER OF THE GOVERNING BODY HAD TAKEN CONCERNING OSP PROPOSAL TO AMEND ARTICLE 17 OF THE STANDING ORDERS (GENEVA 2413 NOTAL). EMPHASIZING THE IMPORTANCE USG ATTACHED TO THIS ISSUE, CHARGE ASKED MEHTA PERSONALLY TO LOOK INTO THIS MATTER. HE REPLIED THAT HE UNDERSTOOD BUT MADE NO STATEMENT AS TO WHAT HE WOULD DO.

3. A MUCH MORE FORTHCOMING AND SYMPATHETIC RESPONSE WAS OBTAINED FROM LABOR MINISTER RAVINDRA VARMA WHEN THE CHARGE CALLED ON HIM MAY 19. DESPITE THE FACT THAT HE HAS NOT BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR LABOR MATTERS PREVIOUSLY, VARMA WAS WELL BRIEFED ON ALL THE ISSUES CHARGE REVIEWED PER REFTELS. MINISTER BEGAN HIS REPLY TO DEMARCHE BY STRESSING THAT GOI VERY MUCH VALUED THE CONTINUED PARTICIPATION OF THE US IN THE ILO. THE GOI WOULD DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO DEAL WITH THE CAUSES OF THE US' DISCONTENT WITH THE ILO. VARMA AGREED THAT SOME PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE IN THIS RESPECT, AND HE RECOGNIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE JUNE MEETING TO THE US' DECISION. RESPONDING TO THE CHARGE'S REVIEW OF THE ISSUES RAISED IN THE SECRETARY'S NOVEMBER 1975 LETTER, VARMA GENERALLY INDICATED THAT THE GOI HELD SIMILAR VIEWS. THE NEW GOVERNMENT WAS, HE STRESSED, CONCERNED ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS WHICH HAD TO BE APPLIED IN A UNIVERSAL, NON-DISCRIMINATORY FASHION.

4. TURNING TO THE SPECIFIC ISSUES FACING THE JUNE CONFERENCE, VARMA SAID THAT THE GOI MEMBER OF THE GOVERNING BODY (MARCH MEETING) HAD PLAYED A ROLE SUPPORTIVE OF THE US POSITION ON THE 1974 ISRAELI RESOLUTION. THE CHARGE THEN RAISED THE NEGATIVE POSITION OF THE GOI MEMBER OF THE GOVERNING BODY CONCERNING THE US PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE STANDING ORDERS. THE CHARGE OBSERVED THAT CONTRARY TO THE INDIAN MEMBER'S CONTENTION DEMOCRATIC PROCEDURE REQUIRED THAT AN ORGANIZATION WORK WITHIN ITS TERMS OF REFERENCE, ITS CONSTITUTION. THE LABOR MINISTER REPLIED THAT THERE WAS A DANGER THAT A MECHANISM TO CONTROL RECEIVABILITY WOULD DIMINISH THE "SCOPE" OF THE ILO, CONFIDENTIAL

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ITS ABILITY TO DEAL WITH THE VARIED PROBLEMS OF ITS DIVERSE MEMBERS. THE CHARGE EXPLAINED THAT WE DID NOT SEEK TO LIMIT THE FLEXIBILITY OF THE ILO BUT MERELY SOUGHT TO ENSURE THAT THE ORGANIZATION PURSUED ITS ACCEPTED OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSES. VARMA SAID THAT THERE WAS A NEED TO STUDY THE ISSUE CAREFULLY AND WELCOMED MEETING THE US DELEGATION. HE CLOSED BY REITERATING THE GOI'S DESIRE TO BE HELPFUL "WHEREVER POSSIBLE" TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEMS OF CONCERN TO THE US.

5. COMMENT: THE LABOR MINISTER'S STATEMENT THAT THE STANDING ORDERS SHOULD NOT BE CHANGED IN ANY WAY WHICH WOULD LIMIT THE "SCOPE" OF THE ORGANIZATION WAS OBVIOUSLY WELL CONSIDERED AND SUGGESTS THAT THE GOI MAY BE HAVING SOME DIFFICULTY WITH THE US PROPOSAL. TO THE EXTENT THAT THE ISSUES AT THE JUNE CONFERENCE ARE POSED SO AS TO CALL INTO PLAY INDIA'S RELATIONS WITH ARAB STATES, THE GOI WILL HAVE DIFFICULTY IN BEING RESPONSIVE TO US CONCERNS. NEVERTHELESS, THE LABOR MINISTER CERTAINLY LEFT THE DOOR OPEN ON THE STANDING ORDERS ISSUE AND SEEMED GENERALLY WELL-DISPOSED TO US POSITIONS ON OTHER

ISSUES.
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Message Attributes

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